

in the hottest time of the year the evenings are comparatively cool in the desert country and just before sunset the hot glare fades from the rocky hills and valleys and is replaced by a warm pink glow which changes the whole appearance of the scene. The sea, the gardens and the desert and its pleasant winter climate all combine to make Bahrain an unusual and attractive place.

The climate of Bahrain and the Persian Gulf has been, wrongly, described as the worst in the world. In Bahrain the year can be divided into three periods each of four months. The best time of the year is from December to March, the cold season, when the wind blows from the north-west and the west. The months of April, May, October and November are pleasant, but from June to the end of September it is hot, extremely humid and the climate is very trying, but although Bahrain in the summer cannot be described as a pleasant place in which to live yet it is not unhealthy. June usually proves an exception to this rule owing to a cool north wind, the "Bara," so called because it is said to last for forty days (Ar. Forty—"Arbain"), which makes the month cooler than May.

The prevailing wind in Bahrain is the "Shamal," a damp wind from the north-west which during the winter has been known to reach a velocity of 50 m.p.h. The "Qaws" is another common wind, hot and dry, it blows from the south-west, bringing to Manama the sands from the south of the island.

Bahrain's rainfall is small, as can be seen from the following table, and averages just under 3" a year.

TEMPERATURE, RAINFALL AND HUMIDITY

Month	Mean Temperature (half max. min.)	Relative Humidity %	Mean Rainfall (in inches)
JANUARY	61°	80	0.39
FEBRUARY	62°	80	.67
MARCH	68°	77	.51
APRIL	76°	72	.24
MAY	84°	65	.08
JUNE	88°	63	0.
JULY	91°	65	0.
AUGUST	92°	71	0.
SEPTEMBER	88°	73	0.
OCTOBER	82°	76	0.
NOVEMBER	74°	78	.24
DECEMBER	65°	81	.83
MEANS	78°	73%	(Total) 2.96 in. p.a.

This table is based on twelve years observations.

WINDS

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Month	Wind Mean Velocity		Percentage of observations from directions in a year.							
	M.P.H.		N.	N.E.	E.	S.E.	S.	S.W.	W.	N.W.
JANUARY	5	13	3	4	6	10	4	24	34	
FEBRUARY	5	19	5	4	10	7	3	16	32	
MARCH	5	19	10	8	10	8	8	13	23	
APRIL	5	17	8	9	7	9	9	16	25	
MAY	5	20	10	6	3	2	5	20	34	
JUNE	5	21	3	3	1	1	2	22	47	
JULY	4	16	2	3	3	2	7	23	43	
AUGUST	3	16	6	8	9	6	7	18	29	
SEPTEMBER	3	22	3	10	6	4	7	17	28	
OCTOBER	3	17	11	7	5	4	4	19	33	
NOVEMBER	4	15	4	6	8	9	5	22	29	
DECEMBER	5	13	3	4	6	7	3	25	37	
MEANS	4.2	17	6	6	6	6	5	20	33	

This table is based on nine years observations.

136 There is little wild life in Bahrain. Mongooses and jerboa (Kangaroo rats) are common in the cultivated area and in the desert respectively in the south of the island and on Umm an-Nasaan there are gazelle and hare. During certain seasons of the year migratory birds make their appearance, including the Hubara, the lesser bustard, which is hunted with falcons by the Ruling Family. Other game birds, duck, snipe and sand grouse are sometimes seen in Bahrain. There are, however, many small local birds including bulbuls, hoopoes and a covey of parrots which at various times escaped from their owners and have now become indigenous.

There are many sea birds in Bahrain. The commonest are tern and cormorant, which nest in thousands on small uninhabited islands filling the air for miles around with the noise of their comings and goings and their quarrels over nesting grounds. Herons and flamingoes are frequently seen as well as other smaller species of shore and sea birds.

This is Bahrain, and it is hoped that the information in the following chapters will add to the interest of the reader who is living in Bahrain, or passing through, by telling him something about the country.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE

162 BAHRAIN is often described as a land of contrasts, and this is especially true of its inhabitants, for in this small group of islands, no larger than a pencil point on a map of the world, there are some 109,650 people (1950 census) drawn from over thirty nations of the world. In the same census it was found that 6,000 Bahrainis were working abroad

to the days when the Rulers of Bahrain lived here and ruled the Islands from the castle. Below the fortress is the spring of Hanani, whose water is the best in Bahrain, and a plain where, in the rainy season, a small lake forms and on disappearing leaves in its place a bright lawn of grass. Rifaa has been expanding rapidly during recent years, the town is spreading to the south-east, and it now possesses boys' and girls' schools and a Municipality. Some members of the Ruling Family still live in the town which has expanded owing to the development of the oil industry, in which some 500 of its male inhabitants are working.

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The situation of the town is ideal for strategical purposes, from it it is possible to see Manama, Muharraq and Sitra while the land around it is free of vegetation which could have served to hide the enemy. It has an excellent climate and is drier than Manama in the summer. To the north of the town are two small graves where members of the Khalifah family are buried; these fell in battle during a civil war which took place in the 19th century.

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There is a tradition connected with the fortress of Rifaa. It is said to have been built in the 17th century by the Wazir of the then Ruler, a certain Shaikh Jabbara. For years the Ruler and his wazir worked together, but one day the Shaikh was told about the beauty of the wazir's wife, and he desired her. He was tricked into believing that he had visited her, though in fact he was entertained by her maid-servant. He was so angry at the deception, about which the wazir knew nothing, that he killed him. The Wazir's widow thereupon fled from Rifaa to the mainland, from where she wrote to the Shah of Persia sending him a miniature palm tree of pearls and gold and saying that so rich was Bahrain that such a tree was given to a child as a toy. She succeeded in exciting the avarice of the Persian Shah, who sent an army to Bahrain, defeated and killed Shaikh Jabbara, and annexed the Islands to Persia, thus avenging the Wazir's wife. This same Shaikh Jabbara is said to have lived in the fort of Amr, south-east of the Jebel, which is mentioned in Chapter VIII.

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There is a third Rifaa, a small community built by BAPCO for its Indian and Pakistani employees; this is mentioned in the Chapter on Bahrain's Oil.

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AWALI

Meaning "The High Places," this name was given by Shaikh Hamed, the late Ruler of Bahrain, to the oil camp when it was first established in its present location. Before the oil company arrived in Bahrain the site was deserted—for who would live in the middle of a waterless desert? But the company wanted to build their town near the oil field, and so the small, 240 foot, hill was chosen. Today Awali somewhat resembles a London suburb or a small American town. As in London, varied gardens and different coloured exteriors of the houses serve to disguise their basic similarity. In these gardens children play while their mothers chat to each other over the fences. Happy

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HOWAR ISLANDS

101 This group of 16 islands is about twelve miles south-east of Ras al-Barr. It consists of one large island, Howar itself, which is about eleven miles long and a mile in breadth, and fifteen other islands much smaller in size. In the centre of the main island there is a rocky eminence known as al-Jebal. There are only two villages, the larger one at the northern end on the shore of the bay consists of stone huts with mat roofs (Kubbar); it also has a small mosque. The Bahrain State Police maintain a garrison on the island, in a fort which dominates the bay and from the roof of which the Qatar peninsular is visible. [36] The islands are inhabited by fishermen from Bahrain and also by men [625] who come to cut gypsum which they sell in Bahrain. The water supply [162] of the island is very limited and consists of old cisterns cut out of living rock which are filled by rain. Attempts to drill for water have [312] failed, but in the years when there is normal or plentiful rainfall the island provides good grazing for camels and sheep. Fishing in the bay is excellent, the water is comparatively deep and a launch can come alongside the short jetty. The southern tip of the island is so close to the Qatar coast that when the tide is out boats cannot pass between the island and the shore, but at one place between Howar and Qatar, a long narrow channel has been hewn out of the coral sea bed to allow boats to pass through a shallow stretch of water. This submarine canal was made by a certain Isa ibn Tarif, a notorious pirate, who played an important part in the history of Bahrain during the middle of the last century; he used the channel as a passage to his fortress on the Qatar coast from where he sallied forth to attack the shipping around Bahrain.

132 The climate of Howar is noticeably better than in Bahrain, it is drier and cooler during the summer nights, but has no other amenities to attract visitors fleeing from the dampness of Bahrain, and at present its only visitors go there for work and not for pleasure.

ZUBARA

361 On the coast of the Qatar peninsular opposite the Bahraini village of Jaw is the ruined town and the bay of Zubara, which has already [172] been mentioned in detail in the history of Bahrain in Part II. The town of Zubara is on the east of the bay and stretches about 1½ miles along the coast and 2 miles inland. The ruins of the town are still impressive. The high wall which surrounds the wide straight streets and the fine mosques, the obvious care with which the town was laid out, speaks well for those who governed it. Further east of the town, at a distance of about two miles across the desert, is the great fort; some of the walls and the mosque are still standing. At the corners of the walls are towers with slits for rifles and the domed roof of the mosque presents an attractive picture. The whole building is made from local stone and little gypsum was used in its construction. Within the fort there are two wells one of which is dry, but the other still

624. PORTUGUESE IN THE BAHRAIN ISLANDS, 1521-1602

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When the mullah heard this advice he was overjoyed and kissed the ground at the feet of the Imam and returned to his people to tell them the good news. On the next morning they all assembled before the Wali, and the mullah did all the things that the Imam had ordered, and everything happened as he had been told, but when the Wali commanded his Wazir to break the pomegranate, smoke and ashes burst forth from it and covered the face and beard of the Wazir.

Then the Wali turned to the mullah and asked him, "Who told you about this trick?"

The mullah answered, "Our Imam and the demonstration of Allah towards us."

Then the Wali rose up from his seat and took the mullah by the hand and called on Allah to bear witness to the trick which had been played on the Shias, and he summoned his servants and his executioner and cut off the head of the Wazir and asked pardon from the people of Bahrain.

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In 1529 Bahrain was again in rebellion against the Portuguese. The islands were governed by a relation of the King of Hormuz. The King of Hormuz himself had been sent to Portugal, as he became too rich in Hormuz. The Portuguese demanded a higher tribute, and in order to pay this the Hormuzians tried to obtain more money from Bahrain, but the Governor refused to pay.

The Portuguese Viceroy, Nuno da Cunha, appointed Tavarez da Sousa as commander of the seas, and it was intended that he should take command of an expedition against Bahrain. Apparently he was loath to go there, and he persuaded the Viceroy to appoint in his place Simon da Cunha, the Viceroy's brother. After waiting some time for reinforcements from Portugal the fleet sailed from Hormuz. It consisted of five vessels carrying 400 men, and some native craft, but it is said that they had only one and a half casks of gunpowder.

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They reached Bahrain in September, the hottest, dampest, and most unhealthy month in the year. They wasted half their small supply of powder in saluting the port. The Bahrain chief hung out two flags on the tower of his fortress, one white and the other red, to show that he was prepared either for peace or for war, but the Portuguese captains were determined to fight. For three days they pounded the walls of the fort with their cannon, and then their supply of gunpowder gave out. In the meantime the Arab leader offered to surrender, on certain conditions, but the Portuguese were determined not to lose the chance of

INTRODUCTION

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131 About midway of the Persian Gulf and some fifteen miles off the coast of Arabia, lie the Bahrein Islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Bahrein, of which the Qatar Peninsula forms the western side. There are five principal islands, only two of which are of real consequence. The largest and by far the most important is variously called Awal, Al Manamah after the principal city, or more commonly just Bahrein. The last is the modern designation.

103 In ancient times, the name "Bahrein" was applied to a larger area which included the Arabian mainland of Qatar and Hajar and the land situated between Mesopotamia and the Gulf of Oman (the Indian Ocean); this area took in the entire southern coast of the Persian Gulf. This has caused widespread misinterpretation of much of the writings of pre-Islamic and Medieval historians. Throughout this book we shall use the term "Bahrein" in its modern sense to refer to the archipelago of Bahrein proper or to the central island, except where the mainland province is clearly indicated.

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511 Bahrein today has few attractions. There is not much to recommend it as a place of residence, as it is intensely hot for about seven months of the year, and for many of the native inhabitants lacking in comfortable living conditions. For tourists it is rather off the beaten track. Nevertheless, through the centuries these bits of land have been considered well worth fighting for by both European and Asiatic empires.

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512 The reason for Bahrein's unusual and enduring importance can be summed up in two words—pearls and strategy. The pearl fisheries of Bahrein have been known all over the world since the dawn of history and, thanks to an abundance of fresh water springs, the island was a frequent stopping place for ships on the trade routes to India and the Far East.

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175 The Portuguese, the first European power to have an Asiatic colonial empire, fought hard for possession of the islands.

geosyncline. The structure of Bahrein is that of a large, single, 133 closed dome covering the entire faulting.

Rocks exposed at the surface consist of:

1. Recent sands and coquinas forming flat, raised beaches surrounding the island from which the surface rises gradually to an elevation 150 to 200 feet above sea level. At this point it breaks away into inward-facing cliffs eighty to one hundred feet high completely surrounding an oval central depression about twelve miles long and four wide.
2. Pleistocene sands, cross bedded and probably wind deposited, lying in the canyons.
3. Miocene silicious clay covering a very limited area.
4. Eocene limestone covering most of the island, the central region of which, known as "Jabal Dukhān" or "Mountain of Smoke," rises to a point 439 feet above sea level. The limestone is very porous and is the source of most [312] of the water in the northern half of the island.

Because of the coral formations surrounding the islands, 133 the sea approach is shallow, so that only vessels of very light 503 draft can land. Ships drawing as much as twenty feet anchor from two to four miles out in the Gulf, and those of greater draft from fourteen to seventeen miles out. Shallow boats are used for all transfers of passengers or freight, and the Standard Oil Company was obliged to construct a submarine pipeline three miles long to convey oil from Bahrein Island to its tankers.

CLIMATE

The Bahrein Islands possess one of the most trying climates 132 in the world. It is intensely hot for about seven months of the year and the humidity stays near the saturation point. The annual average temperature is 78° F. with a corresponding relative humidity of 73%. The hottest month is August, when the mean temperature is 92° and between noon and 3 P.M. may

- 132 go as high as 109° — the hottest yet recorded. The coolest weather comes in December and January, with an average temperature of about 60° ; the lowest ever recorded was 41° in January. From October to April the temperature ranges from 60° to 80° . There are only about three inches of rainfall during the year, all of it between the middle of October and the middle of May.

There are also seasonal winds. The *Shamal*, or Northwestern, blows for forty days beginning in June and returns to become very violent in January and February. At times the wind may reach a velocity of sixty miles per hour, accompanied by a great quantity of dust and sand from the Arabian desert.

The very hot wind known as the *Qaws*, or Southwestern, comes irregularly between December and April and is likely to blow for extended periods of time. It generally brings strong rain and violent squalls and for this reason has always been dreaded by the navigators of the Persian Gulf.

The following tables, adapted from the *Persian Gulf Pilot*, give the average monthly temperature and the velocity of the winds in the Bahrein Islands.

Table 1. METEOROLOGICAL TABLE*

Month	Mean Temperature ($\frac{1}{2}$ Max. Min.)	Relative Humidity %	Mean Rainfall (in inches)
January	61° F.	80	0.39
February	62	80	.67
March	68	77	.51
April	76	72	.24
May	84	65	.08
June	88	63	0.
July	91	65	0.
August	92	71	0.
September	88	73	0.
October	82	76	0.
November	74	78	.24
December	65	81	.83
Mean	78	73	(Total) 2.99

* Compiled from 12 years' observations.

Table 2. WINDS*

Month	Wind—Mean Velocity miles/hr.	Percentage of observations from								
		N.	N.E.	E.	S.E.	S.	S.W.	W.	N.W.	Culm.
January.....	5	13	3	4	6	10	4	24	34	2
February.....	5	19	5	4	10	7	3	16	32	4
March.....	5	19	10	8	10	8	8	13	23	1
April.....	5	17	8	9	7	9	9	16	25	0
May.....	5	20	10	6	3	2	5	20	34	0
June.....	5	21	3	3	1	1	2	22	47	0
July.....	4	16	2	3	3	2	7	23	43	1
August.....	3	16	6	8	9	6	7	18	29	1
September.....	3	22	3	10	6	4	7	17	28	3
October.....	3	17	11	7	5	4	4	19	33	0
November.....	4	15	4	6	8	9	5	22	29	2
December.....	5	13	3	4	6	7	3	25	37	2
Mean.....	4.2	17	6	6	6	6	5	20	33	1

* Nine years' observations. Height above sea level, 18 feet.

Bahrain M22
Kuwait M11
Saudi Arabia M51

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ARABIA

SA companies may need to be defined now that one concessionaire
471 seems likely to create revenue; problems may also arise if, as a
648 result of oil developments, it is planted with a population that
will need to be endowed with public services and, no doubt,
with a system of taxation.

BAHRAIN

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The Bahrain Archipelago is a group of islands in the Gulf of Bahrain, which is bounded on the east by the Qatar Peninsula and on the west by the mainland coast of al-Hasa. Its total area is 213 square miles. The principal island—Bahrain itself—is about thirty miles long and ten miles wide. It is low-lying and its northern end is well-watered by fresh water springs and produces good date crops. Citrus fruit and lucerne are also grown. The oilfields lie round the rocky cluster of hills known as Jebel Dukhan (Hill of Smoke), which is in the barren centre of the island.

B To the north-east of Bahrain Island, and joined to it by a
491 causeway and motor road, is the low, sandy island of Muharraq,
504 and between the two islands is a good deep-water harbour

[712] (Khor Kaliya). It is used as a small British naval base; an American admiral also flies his flag there. Nearby there is a second, but shallow harbour (Bahrain harbour), which faces

B north and is usefully equipped. The natural aerodrome on
508 Muharraq Island has been developed into the largest commercial
509 airfield in the Persian Gulf and now serves the airliners

B of all nations. It is also used by the RAF, and the whine of jet
133 aircraft is a commonplace. The south end of the island of
132 Bahrain is low-lying and sandy. The climate, though oppressive

B in summer owing to the prevalent heat and damp of the western
161 shores of the Persian Gulf, is more humid and less windy than
that of Kuwait. The population of the Archipelago was 109,650
when a census was taken in 1950.¹

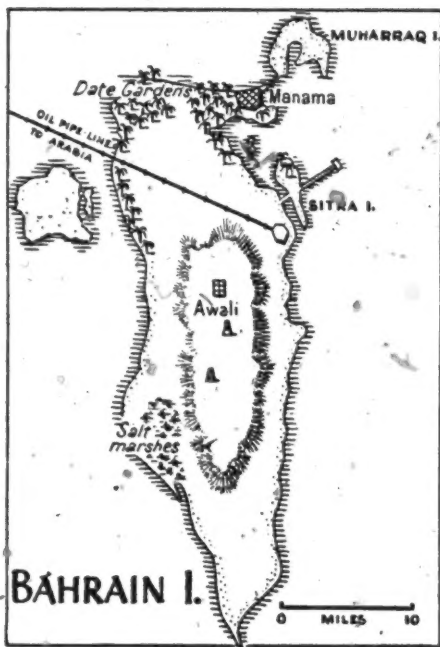
B The capital and the seat of government is the port of Manama.² It is generally referred to as Bahrain, and is situated
361 between the two harbours. It has a population of 39,648, which
161 includes many rich Arab, Persian, and Indian merchants, as
162 well as some 300 Europeans and Americans. The second town,
Muharraq, on Muharraq Island, has a population of 24,566
which is purely Arab.

B The British Political Agency is in Manama town, which also
361 boasts an electricity station, a wireless station, post offices,
hospitals, clubs, public gardens, and up-to-date schools. The
town is well supplied with good motor roads, and there are

¹ 1952 estimate, 115,000. ² Population: 1930, 39,648; 1952 (estimate), 45,000.

132 The climate is typical of the Persian Gulf region, with intense heat and high humidity for 6 months of the year. According to observations for the 10-year period 1942-51, the maximum temperatures averaged 107° to 109° F. in July and August; the minimum temperatures, 83° to 85° F. Corresponding temperatures for January, the coolest month, were 70° F. and 50° F., respectively. The rainfall, which is normally around 3 inches a year, is distributed irregularly between November and May, with the maximum precipitation from December through February. Sand-laden winds, known locally as the *shamal*, often blow with con-

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- 132 considerable violence, particularly in June and July and in January and February.

POPULATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

POPULATION

- 161 At the time of the second census in
464 1950, the population of Bahrain numbered 109,650, with 91,179 Bahrain subjects and 18,471 foreigners. In addition, about 5,000 Bahrain nationals were believed to be working in other countries, chiefly in Saudi Arabia. Among the foreign residents there were 6,934 Iranians, 3,043 Indians, Pakistanis and Goanese, 2,526 Saudi Arabians, 2,466 Omanis and Muscatis, and 2,208 British and other Europeans and Americans.
- 144 The Bahrainis represent a medley of Arab and Persian peoples, as well as various Negro admixtures, descendants of former slaves from Africa. The Baharna, the original inhabitants of the islands, are of mixed Arab-Persian origin, while the Arabs derive chiefly from the mainland of Arabia. The population is almost exclusively Moslem: in 1950, only 4 per cent of the local residents belonged to other religious communities, with 2,348 Christians, 975 Hindus and 293 Jews. Both the Shia and the Sunni sects of Islam are prominent. The Baharna and the Iranians are Shiites, while most of the Arabs are Sunnites, including a small contingent which adheres to the Wahhabi branch of central Arabia. Arabic is the national language. Other tongues are employed by the different racial groups, but most educated Bahrainis and town-dwelling laborers are familiar with English.
- 191
- 462 The returns of the 1950 census indicated
632 that almost 62 per cent of the people lived in the 3 main towns of Manama, Muharraq and Heekl, and the remainder in some 80 rural villages and settlements. Manama, the seat of government and the largest town, located on the island of Bahrain, had a population of 39,648. Muharraq, the chief town on the adjacent island, numbered ap-

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BAHREIN

- 133 el-Kabb, runs into the island from the E. coast, penetrating nearly to the centre. The rocks of Bahrein, except those of Jebel ed-Dukhān, which are dark, are pale-coloured limestone of the Eocene Age, sometimes sandy or argillaceous, and containing much flint or other siliceous material, with both gypsum and salt. The interior depression, like the flat shores of the island, has emerged from the sea in more recent times; the latter consists of coral rocks or shelly concrete. There is a small deposit of asphalt 3 miles SSE. of Jebel ed-Dukhān. The Bahrein islands are famous, like the oases of Hasa and Qatif, for a number of springs, clear but slightly brackish, which are fed by the drainage from Nejd travelling down to the coast under the Dahanaḥ desert. Some of the springs are submarine (*kaukab*); the best known of these are that called *Abu Māhur*, close to Muharraḡ Island, and that near the E. extremity of *Khōr Fasht*, a large coral reef about 7 miles NW. of Bahrein Island. The best water of the archipelago comes from the *Haneini* wells N. of the central depression on Bahrein, and the *Khālid* and *Umm Ghuweifah* wells on the adjoining plateau. The springs N. of the Khōr el-Kabb are generally almost pure, but warm, as in Hasa: the best known are called *Adāri*, *Qassāri*, and *Abu Zeidān*.

CLIMATE

- 132 Through the nearness of the sea on all sides, and abundant irrigation, the atmosphere of Bahrein is damp and heavy, with a mean humidity ranging from 79–80 per cent. of saturation. Though [164] there is much malaria and rheumatic disease, the climate is not the most unhealthy in the Gulf. The maximum temperature, usually attained in August, is about 104° F.; the minimum, reached in December or January, about 48°. The average rainfall for the years 1910–13 was 4.55 in. The weather from October to April inclusive is not unpleasant, indoor temperature ranging between 60° and 85°. In January and February N. winds blow, and it is cold enough for fires to be acceptable. Though the weather is hot from the beginning of May to the middle of June, the heat is still tempered by the sea-breeze, and nights are fairly cool. The oppressively hot weather lasts from the middle of June to the end of September; in this period, though there may be irregular land-breezes, the thermometer remains persistently above 100° F. All rains fall between the middle of October and the middle of May, but actual wet days are few. The prevailing wind is the *Shamāl* or north-wester, which blows for forty days from the second week in June and is very violent in winter; next to this in frequency

CLIMATE

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comes the north wind, and in violence the south-wester (*Qaus*), 132 which is fiercely hot in August and blows irregularly between December and April. See further, vol. ii, p. 346 f.

POPULATION

Though no census has been taken, the population of the 4 towns 162 and 104 villages in the principality has been estimated as over 100,000, of whom 60,000, chiefly townsmen, are Sunni, and 40,000, 795 chiefly villagers, Shiah. The latter are for the most part *Behārīnīn* (see p. 299), but this class, which is mainly agricultural, is here hardly above the servile state. The most numerous Sunni community is that of the *Hūwālah*, who are townsmen of Manā'ah, Muharraq, Budeyya, Hadd, and Hālah Bin Anas, living by trade and without solidarity among themselves or influence on others. The 'Utūb, Sādah, and Dawāsir are the most influential tribesmen, the first on account of their connexion with the ruling family, the second by virtue of their supposed sacred origin, the Dawāsir because they are well disciplined by their chief and comparatively wealthy; there are also a few Beni Khālid (see below, p. 608). The remainder of the Sunni population live mostly on the coast, and depend for their subsistence rather on the sea than on cultivation. There are at least 5,000 free negroes and 6,000 negro slaves; a few Persians, Hindus, Basra Arabs and Jews complete the population. Life in Bahrein is more various and many 511 coloured than on the mainland of Arabia; the exclusiveness of 177 a people cut off from intercourse with other races is absent, and the 186 opportunity to indulge a taste for luxury has not been disdained. Direct relations with Persia and India have influenced costume, domestic appliances, and the architecture of the larger houses, in which the pointed arch is a conspicuous feature.

INDUSTRIES AND TRADE

The most important occupation in Bahrein is pearl-fishing, and 228 the fisheries are the most valuable in the Gulf next to those of Trucial Oman. Were the fisheries to cease, most of the urban population would have to leave the country. They employ more than 900 boats, each with a crew of about 20, the total crews amounting to nearly 20,000 men. The pearling season opens in May, and some boats continue operations until about October. Special measures had to be taken in 1915 by the Sheikh, in conjunction with the British Resident, to enable the pearl-fishing population to tide over the crisis caused by the stoppage of the